



Stay Home Artist Residency

RESIDENT BLOGS

Issue 1, Vol. 2

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La Vaughn Belle

US Virgin Islands

Post #2

lavaughnbelle.com

strange gods before thee

RITUAL: pour a thin line of molasses into the ocean

*The memory is fragile
so are the lines between malevolent and benevolent
between invoking and imploring
between offerings and tender.*

*Make them soft
so their lashes feel like feathers
so their iron feels like rolled cotton,*

*Cool his heart
bend their spirit
and if their spirit will not bend*

Give them death.

In the Danish colonial archives, in the court records specifically, we see glimpses of African and African Caribbeans social magical religious systems that emerge under a term *obeah*. We see how it's transmuted in the colonial prism of the Slave Code laws that prohibit such practices and how the practitioners present themselves in the face of harsh and violent punishments. They did not try to poison their masters, no *I tried to soften his heart*. I tried to make him not be so angry. This is what Raina says. This is what Rachel says when questioned in the 1700s. There are so many questions. So many questions. I cannot read the archives because they are still in Gothic Danish. I read the works of Danish scholars writing about the archives and I wonder if they have ever been to the ocean when it is so still you feel as though you can walk across it. And I wonder if they know that we still seek it for healing, for mothering care. That this is still where we take our children to clear their noses, and soothe our weary bones and glide across time. The sea is history Derek Walcott said. So when I see the fragmented memory in the archives of people trying to escape the 150 lashes or to have an iron placed around their neck for a year for magic, for healing, for love, for hope I want to make my own archive of remembering. I want to assemble, and recreate, and embody them.

RITUAL: wash the coral stones that were cut from the ocean from the enslaved Africans (who stood naked as the wind whipped across their backs) that made their way to the foundation of the buildings built during the Danish colonial period that are now fragmented ruins of abandoned buildings and history.

*These are the new idols
and they are not false*

*I gather their neglected offerings
strange gods before thee*

*Cut
they cut
this is how you know they are real
this is how you know*

*they were carved from the sea
splayed out onto the land
and pulled from the earth*

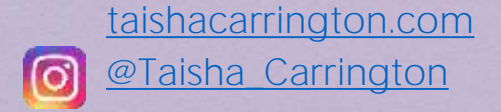
*to be a ruin
to be a witness
to be a testimony
to be a monument.*



Taisha Carrington

Barbados

Post #2



For the stay-at-home artist residency, I am continuing a body of work I started in 2019, where I build devices to mirror my understanding and experiences of Barbados- navigating the in-between space of overcoming colonialism and walking into the threats of climate change.

One of the pieces I have been working on during SHAR is a wave activity reading device and an accompanying app that shares notifications about high wave activity on a beach in Barbados.

I have been testing the 'basic' tech elements, which are motion sensors and cheap cell phones acting as hubs to collect the data for the app. The goal here isn't to invent something new, rather to create community and solidarity around climate justice via an app and give vicerality to everyday life of people in a region most vulnerable to climate change. As building this main sculpture remains slower work, I have been practicing for an accompanying performance to be done in November. Becoming more aware of my body and the role it plays in my art, how my concepts may become more abstracted and bringing myself into the fold of the stories I tell and the objects I produce.

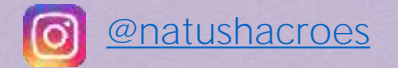
I have been conflicted about my appearance as an **'attractive woman'** versus how I wish to be perceived by viewers in relation to my work. I have felt a disconnect for quite some time but with little resolution. These conflicts have sparked a surge of introspection into my role as the artist in the work I produce.

Through the process of preparing my character for my performance, I am finding ways to bridge the gap between my own identity and the lens through which I see Barbados and the Caribbean, realising that these narratives have been running parallel for some time in my subconscious - that is, where I fit in the island and where the island fits in with the world.

Perhaps uncovering that my fight to tell these stories of post-colonialism and the Anthropocene is a fight to speak of myself - a level of vulnerability that is hardest for me in my practice, however, a welcomed evolution to my work.



Natusha Croes



Aruba

Post #2

What does it mean to create from a state of reverence for this place? For the place that carries the seed of your origin? I came to believe that my practice is an ongoing love letter to Aruba. A homage to the cultural and natural heritage that invites me to dream again, from the complexity and multiplicity that exists here I reinvent myself. From the myriad of languages, I dream about the fluidity it propels. I have departed many times, but I always came back. I gave in to the restlessness. I see past what it “misses” into the possibilities for co-creation, collaboration. A relentless search for a method to engage with it in such a way that I become an avid listener and thus transmitter of all it has to say. To be in a constant transit, navigating the multiple routes of identity; Aruba enables. Philosopher Deleuze and Guatarri termed it as a state of deterritorialisation. In my master's thesis I describe this everlasting feeling through the following lines:

“Most of my contemporaries – within the same, prior or previous generation, leave the island to be able to pursue higher education. And in that doing a liminal space starts to be constructed or a sense of deterritorialization, which conveys the displacement of identities, persons, and meanings that is endemic to the postmodern world system [..] a term created by Deleuze and Guattari to illustrate the alienation felt in language [..] the value of this conception lies in the paradoxical movement between minor and major - a refusal to admit either position as final or static (Kaplan, 1987; p188)”

As I move from the margins looking in I contemplate upon the fluidity of existence. I not only contemplate - I am completely seduced by it. By following the routes that can lead me to that state where I become again. A flux in between multiple routes of identity, languages and thus states of being, a rhizomatic state; multiple entry ways into the interpretation of being home. I see my practice existing through the nomadic and rhizomatic concept proposed by Deleuze and Guatarri and motivated by the nostalgic memory which drives me to reconnect or reclaim a state of identity very much illustrated by the washing in and out of the waves which provide the constancy for change. To fluidly exist is to surrender to the alchemy of being shaped by your environment. By moving, speaking, and singing on behalf of it. I surrender to this place. I allow this conversation to lead the way.





Ever since my arrival to Aruba I have craved for a space; a sanctuary where I could create a microcosm of the experiences specific locations of Aruba has granted me. To make accessible, sensible, these locations that would be otherwise far removed. To give it a new contemporary take, a new interpretation, to understand it, intimately.

After a year of being here and searching I was granted this sanctuary by UNOCA (local culture and arts funds). Throughout these last few weeks I have been settling in a studio space.

I feel the swollen sense of gratitude in my chest. Little by little, the island was enabling me to exist. As I curated the space to welcome the items I have been working with from the first location I am researching, I start my performative interactions, documentation and state of reflection. Hereby I will share with you an account of what this space for encounter, contemplation and creation has been phrasing.

(To be continued)







Maria E. Govan

vimeo.com/mariagovan

The Bahamas

Post #2

“Play the Devil” was born from my first encounter with the Blue Devils of Paramin while I visited Trinidad on an artist grant that I had received from the D’Aguiar Art Foundation of Nassau. I was gifted the opportunity to witness and document traditional Mas, with the commitment to return to The Bahamas and create a body of work.

Trinidad’s renowned photographer, Abigail Hadeed, had spent decades documenting Carnival. She offered me lodging and incredible access to

so much of Trinidad’s riches. The blue devils of Paramin on Carnival Monday night made an unforgettable impression that haunted me. I returned home launching a mixed media exhibition at Popop Studios which included video, photography and also painting.







Click above to view video on YouTube

I said to Abigail that Carnival Monday night, that I wanted to *tell the story of a boy who played the Devil*. That simple intention began to ripen. I spent time asking it about itself. Who is this boy? What does he wish to say to me, to the world at large? At the time there was also the suicide of a young man in Trinidad who was gay and allegedly involved with someone older. His death really stayed with me and impacted the story that took form.

Some two years later we were in production of **“Play the Devil,”** having received significant support by the Trinidadian government and with Abigail producing. We filmed our recreation of Carnival Monday night in the very same yard featured at the Popop show, with the very same group of devils that you see highlighted in the video here above. The making of **“Play the Devil”** was magical, infused with the very special Trinidad that embraced me for four years.

And still you might ask, how and where is Maria Govan located in this work? Both Rain and Greg, the two lead characters of my films, have a great deal in common with me - particularly my young self who came of age in The Bahamas – each are compelled to find their voice and speak up for themselves, both have strong and influential Grandmothers they love, and both have a deep connection with water as a spiritual element. Greg, being queer in a homophobic space, is certainly reflective of my own journey with belonging, acceptance and self love, which might I add was not an easy one. And so there are layers upon layers - the land, culture and people speak to me and guide my gaze, and then the heart takes form, calling me inward, reflecting my own heart, needs and even wounds, and the dance ensues - a kind of channeling, listening and speaking all at once - an honoring.



Patrick Jerome Lafayette

chrismixradio.com

Jamaica

Post #2

Unveiling Pam Hall – Music professional extraordinaire

I have known Pam Hall for many years. Recently I decided that she would be one of the highlighted artists in my Heartbeat to Drumbeat series as I knew that she had been working in the music industry for over 40 years and had paid her dues as a foundation builder of the Reggae and music industry in Jamaica and internationally.

As a singer, producer, writer, vocal arranger and musician, Pam Hall has left her mark on a number of cornerstone recordings. As a background vocalist she has provided perfect pitch harmony for reggae giants such as Dennis Brown and Ernie Ranglin on their iconic recordings. She has also blazed her own trail as a lead vocalist on some truly popular songs including *Perfidia* and *I was born a woman*.

She hails from a musical pedigree family that includes brother Raymond and sister Audrey Hall of "One Dance Won't Do", a major chart buster when it was released.

Shy and often reserved, this very talented individual has nonetheless made her mark by capturing the hearts and emotions of her wide audience in a special way. Since her very first venture into a recording studio to do a recording with friend Tinga Stewart, to now being an independent singer/producer, even producing her offspring, the female singing sensation Tafina; who too has been blazing her own musical trail.

In the annals of reggae music, the female producer, singer or musician has had to work a bit harder than their male counterpart to achieve their very own standing in the musical arena. This is an experience that Pam can attest to and she speaks candidly about her experience in the music industry as a woman – how her lack of knowledge when she started resulted in a loss of income and royalties. She advises newcomers to the industry to educate yourself from early about copyright and entitlements so that you get what you are entitled to as a professional.

Highly respected by her friends and colleagues, Pam Hall is a true professional and reggae ambassador who has dedicated her entire life to music. It is a joy in the Heartbeat to Drumbeat series as Pam pays tribute to Orville Woods, Woodie, of the singing duo, Pam and Woodie.





Pam will tell you of, how much of a major influence Woodie has been in honing her singing and performance skills.

Another contributor to the shaping and exposure of the vocal prowess of this great voice was the legendary musician and composer, Harold Butler. Pam appeared on background vocals on a number of Butler's landmark productions, including the Beresford Hammond classic, One Step Ahead.

Pam Hall has graced some of the well-known foundation songs by noted reggae luminaries such as Reggae's Crown Prince, Dennis Brown and the indomitable Peter Tosh.

It's been a remarkable musical journey for Pam Hall so far, and it's a wonderful privilege to have her share this journey with you and me.

Join us on chrismixradio.com as we continue to share the stories of Reggae royalties like the indomitable Pam Hall.



Daphné Menard

daphnemenard.com

Haiti

Post #2

Je me questionne beaucoup.

Quelle forme cela va-t-il prendre?

Avec qui travailler?

Est-ce finalement pertinent ?

Pour quelle cause ? Celle de l'artiste vraiment ou de la nécessité de travailler une création ?

Je ne suis pas sûr. Je suis rarement sûr dans mon processus créatif. C'est ce qui fera peut-être que ma démarche sera maintenue dans l'expérimental.

Moi. J'ai peur de ne pas avoir la distance nécessaire. Ou pas assez de talent pour m'immerger dans une démarche si déséquilibrée entre ce que je ressens, ce qu'il en est vraiment de la réalité complexe de ce que CONVERION veut aborder et ce qu'il en sera finalement. Je ne pas sûr. Peut-être.

J'ai rencontré David Charlier.

Un homme frontière. Artiste multiple. Père. Parle de trouver un JOB. Quarantaine.

Son questionnement très intellectuel de sa situation me parle et fait écho à mon incertitude. Il parlera peut-être à ma place. Ou bien je me cacherai derrière sa volubilité pour dire. **L'histoire d'un duo?**

L'ambition est d'arriver à proposer un discours, un dispositif qui se situera à l'intersection, aux frontières de la sensibilité artistique et la rigueur ou l'**objectivité** académique.

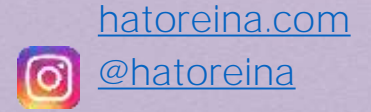
Une prétention qui aboutira sûrement à autre. **Puisqu'il** est clair que cette CONFIRMANCE est un prétexte pour me questionner sur la fragilité de ma profession.



Sofía Gallisá Muriente

Puerto Rico

Post #2



So, I finally finished my film *Celaje* since the last post, and I'm currently installing an exhibition where I will show it for the first time this weekend, at independent gallery space Km 0.2 (kilometroceropuntodos.com) in Santurce, Puerto Rico.

It's my first medium length film and the culmination of a long process where different ideas and images I had been accumulating found their place all together in one work. I've been delighted to work with José Iván Lebrón Moreira on the sound design and original musical score of the film, which mixes found recordings from an old machine found in my grandmothers house with organic sounds from his backyard and ambient music.





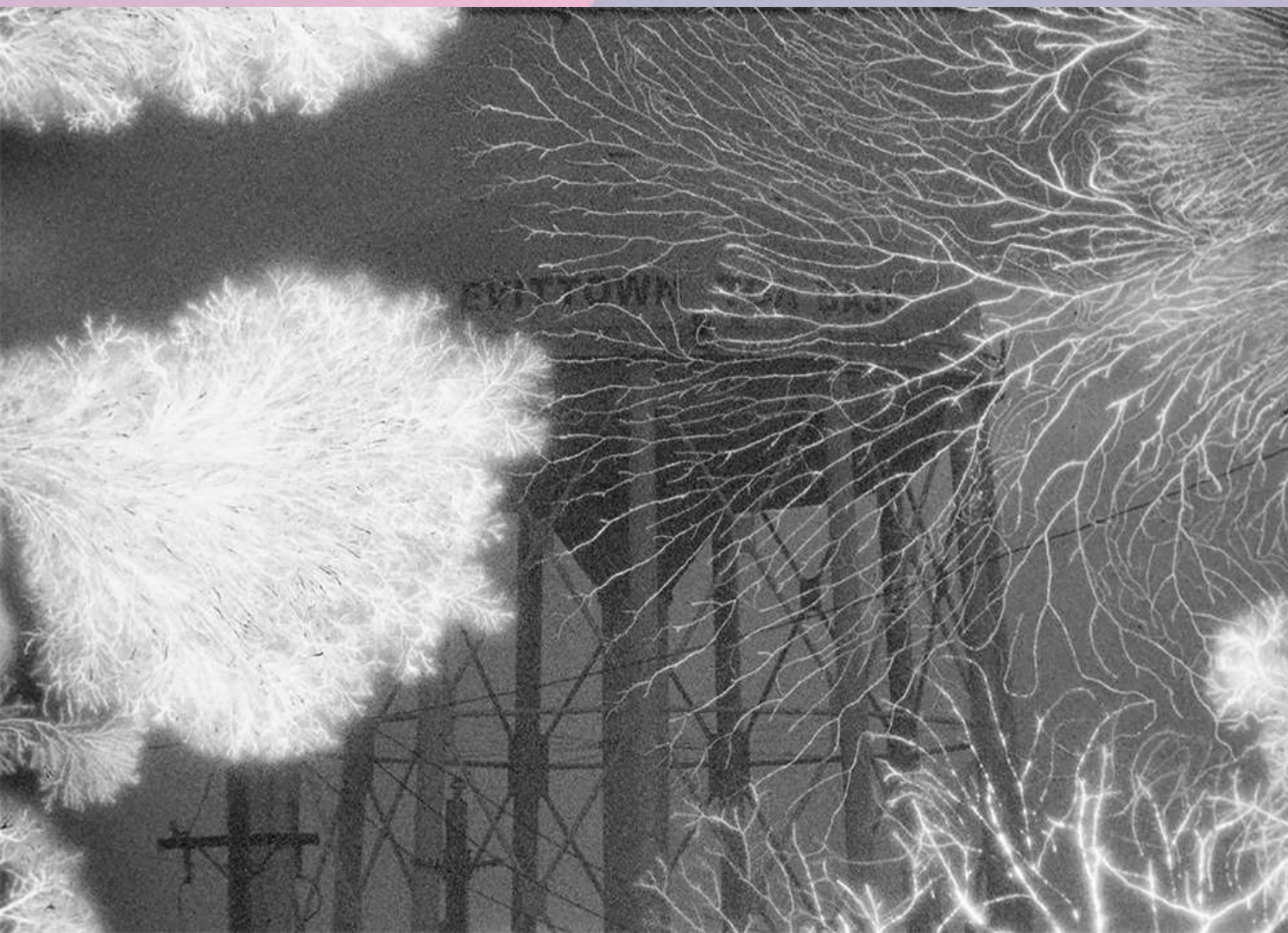
The title of the piece refers to a Spanish word that is mainly used to describe a group of clouds, but in Puerto Rico we use it to refer to a shadow or undistinguishable presence that passes us by. It can also be used to describe an ominous sign. I wasn't aware that it was a rare adaptation of the word to use it to describe people and animals until I considered it as a title, and it has really gotten me thinking about Caribbean creole language and its beautiful mutability. Do other Caribbean people know this word? Do you have an equivalent in other languages?

It's an apt title for many reasons - not just my interest in the visible trace of disaster which I referred to in my first blog post, but also the fact that it's a borrowed word from science used to describe human activity. This has been a valuable source of understanding, language and acceptance for me in these catastrophic times, and it's a big part of the film as well. In this state of exception where human/capitalist time seems so interrupted and outdated, natural time continues seemingly unaffected. It's no surprise that so many people have devoted quarantine time to caring for plants, germinating seeds, and watching closely as gardens grow. It's been healing for me too, and I guess what I'm proposing is to extend that lens to many other things around us. In this way, my film is not just about disasters or the problems of photography, but about geology, mycology and evolution.



What brings all of these themes together is my family history, and in particular my relationships to my grandmother Maria Luisa and my father. In the midst of natural disasters, their illness and death represented another disaster, though one that is lived intimately and through time. Since their storytelling was my most important link to the past, my appreciation of Puerto Rico's history is intertwined with our affections and shared quotidian spaces. In *Celaje*, the personal is evidenced as naturally political, and the death of the modern commonwealth project of Puerto Rico is presented as simultaneous to personal losses and disappearances. As in nature, I trust that the remains of both people and places that have ceased to be nurture the ground and the seas so that other life might emerge.





Celaje will be presented online soon, but meanwhile you can also check out my piece *Assimilate & Destroy II* (vimeo.com/426792590), which will be screening this weekend at independent art space El Lobi in Santurce as well, and which is part of the same series of works considering the relationship between climate and memory.



CELAJE

UNA PELÍCULA DE SOFÍA GALLISÁ MURIENTE
CON MÚSICA ORIGINAL DE JOSÉ IVÁN LEBRÓN MOREIRA

Click above to view video on YouTube



Reginald Senatus (Redji)

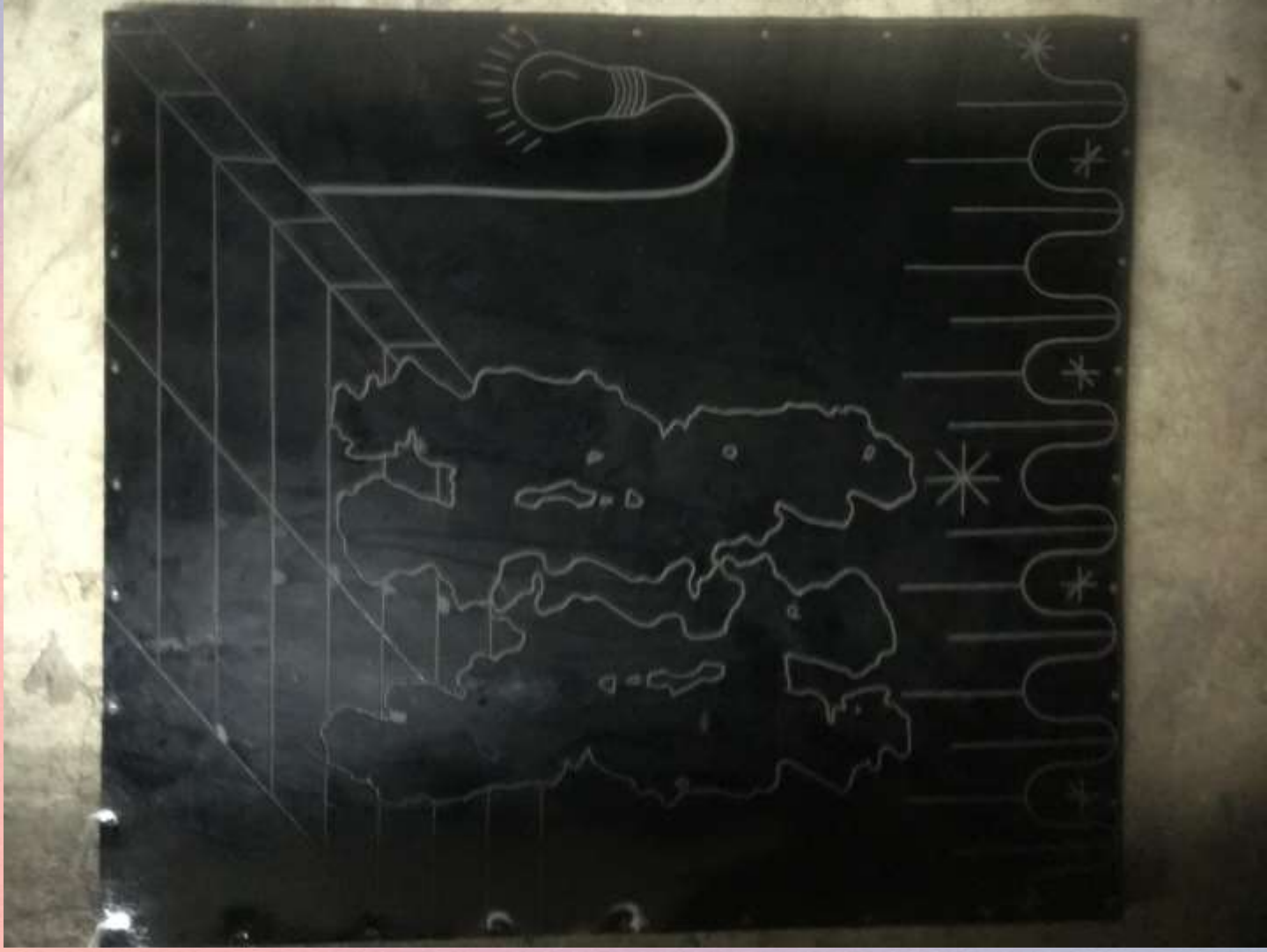


[@redji_plasticien](https://www.instagram.com/redji_plasticien)

Haiti

Post #2











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CATAPULT | A Caribbean Arts Grant is a COVID-19 relief programme conceptualised by Kingston Creative (Jamaica) and Fresh Milk (Barbados) and funded by the American Friends of Jamaica | The AFJ (USA). Designed as a capacity building initiative it will directly provide financial support to over 1,000 Caribbean artists, cultural practitioners and creative entrepreneurs impacted by the pandemic and working in the themes of culture, human rights, gender, LGBTQIA+, and climate justice.

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